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In Ohio a bill is now before the general assembly, which, if successful, will add a legislative reference bureau to the Ohio State Library.

ETHEL CLELAND.

**Municipal Charter Revision—Chicago.** Chicago is experiencing considerable difficulty in securing a new charter. The charter drafted by the charter convention of 1906 was so mutilated by the state legislature that it was overwhelmingly defeated when submitted to the voters of the city. The charter convention pursued a different policy this year, for, instead of submitting a charter or charter amendments as an entirety, eleven separate bills or amendments were proposed, thus giving not only the legislature but the voters as well an opportunity to vote on the merits of each proposition. The voters, however, had no opportunity to pass judgment, since all of the bills were killed in the legislature. This is but another instance to show how dependent most cities are on the state legislature for charter legislation. It is only necessary to contrast the position of Chicago with that of Los Angeles, San Francisco and other cities which have the power to frame their own charters to show what an advantage the latter have over the former.

The general scope and purpose of the proposed charter bills were to consolidate the present, and to confer additional, powers upon the city. Chicago is already quite democratic in the broad sense of the term, and the tendency, as evidenced by the proposed bills, is to make it still more democratic. Instead of showing a fear of the people, the proposed measures evidence confidence in them, for provision is made for giving the people the right to voice their sentiments in regard to certain matters of legislation. In addition to having the power to pass on the charter bills it was further provided that the people should have the opportunity to accept or reject ordinances relating to certain subjects. No provision relative to the closing or keeping open of places on Sunday for the sale of intoxicating liquors can take effect until the people are given an opportunity to vote upon it separately from any other proposition. No ordinance granting a public utility franchise for a longer period than five years shall go into effect until sixty days after its passage, and if within that time a petition is signed by 10 per cent of the registered voters, the ordinance must be submitted to the voters.

The city is given power to acquire, own, construct, maintain and operate all public utilities, or to lease the same for a period not longer than twenty years. It was also provided in one of the bills that the

city should have the power to regulate the charges to be made for public services and to require adequate service and the reasonable extensions of such services. The city itself cannot proceed to operate any public utility for the use or benefit of private consumers, until approved by a majority of those voting on the proposition. This provision would eliminate the difficulty which Chicago experienced during Mayor Dunne's administration.

A very desirable feature of the proposed bills was that relating to the expenditures by candidates for municipal offices. Corporations are not permitted to make any contributions, and every political committee must have a treasurer who is required to keep a detailed account of all receipts and expenditures.

Charter bill number 2 is probably the most important of the eleven bills which were drafted by the charter convention this year. This bill relates to the organization and powers of the city. It is provided in this bill that hereafter no general law of the state relative to cities shall, in the absence of an express declaration of legislative interest to the contrary, be construed as altering or repealing any act specially relating to the city of Chicago. It is also provided that the specification of particular powers shall not be construed as impairing the general grant of powers to be bestowed by this bill. The city council is given power to enact ordinances creating new offices in the same manner as other ordinances are enacted. At present, it requires a two-thirds vote to create a new office, and even this is a greater power than that possessed by many cities, for it frequently happens that the city must go to the legislature for the creation of a new office. If a city is to have any vestige of home rule, it would seem that the power to create an office should be among the first powers conferred. Provision is made in the bill for conferring very wide police power upon the city. The city council is given full power to impose a license tax upon all persons, firms and corporations holding or using franchises or privileges wholly or in part within the city, and the city council may provide by ordinance for the prohibition and summary suppression of any act, thing or business until the license is paid. Chicago already possesses more power in this respect than many other cities, for in some cases the cities are at the mercies of state legislatures, and when the latter is the case, the license fees which properly belong to the city are paid into the state treasury. Another very important power given the city council is the power to regulate the service and charges to persons or corporations owning or operating public utilities or any other business carried on

under special grants of license or privilege from the city, notwithstanding the grant of such license, or privilege. The city council is given power, upon recommendation of the mayor, by two-thirds vote of all its members to order any expenditure the necessity of which is caused by an emergency happening after the annual appropriation has been made. The bill also provides that the city may acquire, by condemnation, property outside of the city for water works, sewers, parks and boulevards.

Had this bill become a law, the mayor would no longer preside over the council as at present, for it provided that the council elect one of its own members to act as presiding officer. It would also have made it possible for Chicago to appoint anyone, whether an elector, and residing in the city or not, to any appointive office or place of appointment. It frequently happens that cities are handicapped in regard to this by provisions requiring all officials to be qualified electors, etc. The city council and any duly authorized committee thereof are given the same power to investigate any department of the city government, and for the purpose of ascertaining the facts in connection with such investigation to compel the attendance and testimony of witnesses the production of books, etc., as that possessed by the civil service commission.

It is worthy of note to mention that the city council is given the power to provide by ordinance a scheme or method of recall. A petition signed by 10 per cent of the registered voters of the city makes it incumbent on the election commissioners to submit such scheme of recall to the voters, and if adopted, shall be subject to repeal or alteration only in the same manner as adopted, that is, by referendum vote. To make any scheme of recall valid, it is necessary to include a provision requiring that a petition must be signed by 25 per cent of the registered voters before a recall election can be ordered.

One of the bills relates to the civil service commission, one of the most important changes in the present law being in reference to the removals from the classified service. The present law requires the commission to investigate and report on every removal while the proposed law leaves it optional with the commission unless the person removed demands an investigation. The person sought to be removed must be served with a copy of the order of removal with written specification of the cause or causes of removal, and he is given not more than seven days in which to file an answer to the charges. The proposed change does not go to the extent of the Kansas City charter and some other

recent civil service laws in giving the appointing officer absolute power to remove any appointee, though requiring him to give written reasons for removal. One of the bills is somewhat novel, though none the less important in view of the agitation which is going on here and abroad, for it provides for woman suffrage at all municipal elections on the same terms as men. It is quite probable that such a bill would be adopted if submitted to the voters of the city, and it would afford an excellent opportunity to judge as to the merits of woman suffrage. Since all progress is the result of experiments, it is to be regretted that this bill, as well as the other bills, failed to pass the legislature.

HORACE E. FLACK.

**Municipal Charter Revision—Colorado Springs.** Colorado Springs has one of the most recent charters, the present charter having been framed by the charter convention, elected January 19, 1909, and ratified by the people May 11. Several innovations have been introduced, but in general it may be said that the Colorado Springs charter is quite similar to that of Berkeley. In fact, it would seem that the charter convention had at hand the results of the labors of the board of free-holders of Berkeley. The fact that many of the cities are following with interest the experiments and results of other municipal governments is one of the most hopeful signs in regard to the improvement of municipal conditions. The outlook for the future seems very hopeful indeed, for there is now being conducted a series of experiments in municipal government which is bound to result in good. Since Galveston, in 1901, embarked upon the commission form of government, a number of cities and towns have adopted plans modeled more or less after it. In fact, nearly all the more recent charters have embodied some feature or features of the commission form. Colorado Springs is one of the latest adherents to this idea. There was evidently little objection to the change, for the vote was 3000 to 200 in favor of it.

According to the charter convention, the charter provides that the legislative, executive and judicial powers of the city shall extend to all matters of local and municipal government, and preserves every valuable feature of the laws of the state, only introducing such new methods of machinery as were deemed advisable and necessary in the assumption of home rule. Colorado, like California, confers upon her municipalities the very important power of framing and adopting their own charters. The powers of the city are vested in the elective officers